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#### OBITUARY:—PROF. WIEGMANN; MR. VIGORS.

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We learn from Mr. J. H. Gurney that a specimen of the Red-breasted Snipe was killed near Yarmouth, early in October. Our informant adds, that it was a male, and had nearly completed its change from the summer to the winter plumage.

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GENTLEMEN,—The following interesting facts are, I think, worthy of record in your Annals.

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The deception which is sometimes practised on naturalists by continental preparers of objects of natural history, is well exemplified by a specimen of a Kingfisher which was purchased in Paris, and is now before me. The specimen decidedly belongs to the genus *Tanysiptera*, of which there is but one species hitherto described, the *Tanysiptera Dea*, a bird rarely seen in collections, though the British Museum contains two good specimens. That to which I now wish to call the attention of ornithologists, differs much from the *Tanysiptera Dea*, both by the shortness of the central tail-feathers and by the richness of the several colours with which it is ornamented: and from these differences it was concluded to be a beautiful new species. But on examining the specimen carefully, some doubt arose as to the fact, whether it had not been, in part, at least, artfully dressed in its present showy plumage, from observing that the structure of some of the feathers was of a more downy nature, especially on the uropygium and beneath the body, than those usually covering the body of Kingfishers. This idea was rendered certain by the discovery that the wings were decidedly those of an *Alcedo Senegalensis*. The addition of wings and feet is not, however, uncommon in stuffed specimens of birds which come from New Guiana, as the natives prepare the skins without those parts, for use as ornaments, and from them the skins are procured and brought to Europe. A further examination proved that the downy feathers (which are of a rich salmon colour) of the uropygium, and most of those beneath the body, had been taken from a specimen of *Trogon Duvaucelii*; while on the sides these latter feathers are mixed with others from the neck of a young bird of *Alcedo leucocephala*, probably thus placed in order to diminish the probability of determining their identity. Having thus shown that all the under part is deceptively put together, it may reasonably be concluded that the feet

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by which the specimen is attached to its perch, have also been added to complete it.

Thus far I have referred to the defective portions, which must be decidedly considered as made up from the plumage of various birds, artificially intermingled, to give the appearance of a perfect specimen. I will now pass to the more pleasing task of noticing the parts which I think are those belonging to a distinct species. I will first, however, mention, that on comparing the feathers of these parts, as far as regards their structure, with those of the same parts of a well-authenticated specimen of *Tanysiptera Dea*, one is readily satisfied with their identity of character and disposition. But the differences of colouring between those portions which are left of the original bird and the same parts in the old species, will be better explained by the following description.

The tips of the feathers that compose the crest, as well as the elongated central tail-feathers, are ultramarine in this bird; while in the *Tanysiptera Dea* these parts are of a rich cobalt; in both, however, the tail-feathers are tipped with white.

The back is deep shining black in the present bird; but in the *T. Dea* that part is of a dull black, with each feather margined with deep blue.

The outer tail-feathers have the inner webs brownish black, and the exterior webs ultramarine; while in the *T. Dea* they are white, margined narrowly on the exterior edges with cobalt.

The central tail-feathers are much shorter than those of the *T. Dea*, though the size of the bird is nearly the same.

From these differences I may venture to give the following short specific characters of the bird before me, under the name of *Tanysiptera Nympha* :—

Deep black above, margined with deep blue; the occipital crest and central tail-feathers ultramarine, the latter tipped with white; the lateral tail-feathers brownish black, with the outer webs ultramarine: beneath, &c.—?

I have two reasons for bringing this partly artificial bird before naturalists :—first, to call the attention of ornithologists to the fact that some of the continental preparers of objects of Natural History still continue the shameful practice of endeavouring to deceive the zealous collector by false means, as in bygone days, when several such were published in splendid works, that have since been discovered to be manufactured for the purpose of obtaining large sums of money from amateurs who were struck by their magnificent appearance: secondly, to point out, as far as such a specimen will admit, the existence, without doubt, of a second species of an extremely rare genus, and thus endeavour to lead to its further elucidation, in the hope of establishing the fact of the existence of more than one species. In further proof of the latter assertion, I may add, that I have seen another specimen, which differs in several respects from both those now mentioned, and which will be soon described by M. La Fresnage, of Paris.—GEORGE ROBERT GRAY.

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FOUNTAIN GUM BOTTLE.

I have found that the fountain inkstand, sold for Stephens's ink (but those sold by Mordan are probably as good), are the best vessels to keep gum-water in for common daily use. The fluid part of the gum-water being considerably above the level of the surface of the gum which is exposed for use, prevents it from becoming dry, as is so constantly the case in other kinds of vessels.—J. E. GRAY.

CARINARIA VITREA, LAMARCK.

Three specimens of this very rare shell have lately been brought to this country by Mr. Reeve, who purchased them at a sale in Holland. The shell of the unhatched animal (as is shown by the shell remaining on the apex of one of the specimens) is smooth, polished, nearly discoidal, and formed of several (three or four) slowly enlarging whorls, so as exactly to resemble the shell of the *Helix lucida* in form and appearance. When the animal is hatched, it suddenly enlarges its shell, and changes its form. The keel is formed of two distinct laminae, one belonging to each side of the shell. In both these particulars, which I believe have not been noticed before, it exactly agrees with the more common *Carinaria Mediterranea*.—J. E. GRAY.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS FOR SEPT. 1840.

Chiswick.—Sept. 1, 2. Fine. 3. Rain. 4. Cloudy: rain. 5, 6. Fine. 7, 8. Very fine. 9. Hazy. 10—13. Very fine. 14. Hazy: heavy rain. 15. Cloudy: rain at night. 16. Rain, with brisk S.W. wind: barometer exceedingly low. 17. Very fine: frosty at night. 18. Frosty haze: very fine. 19. Cloudy and cool. 20. Fine. 21. Fine: rain. 22. Heavy rain. 23. Rain: clear and fine at night. 24. Heavy showers. 25. Cold and wet. 26. Overcast: rain. 27. Cloudy and fine. 28. Heavy rain. 29, 30. Clear and fine.

Boston.—Sept. 1. Cloudy. 2. Fine. 3. Rain: rain early A.M. 4—6. Fine. 7. Cloudy. 8. Fine. 9. Cloudy: rain early A.M. 10. Fine: rain early A.M. 11, 12. Fine. 13. Fine: rain P.M. 14. Cloudy. 15. Fine. 16. Fine: rain early A.M.: rain P.M. 17. Cloudy: rain early A.M. 18. Fine: rain P.M. 19, 20. Cloudy. 21. Cloudy: rain P.M. 22. Stormy and rain: rain A.M. 23. Rain: rain early A.M. 24. Fine: rain early A.M. 25. Rain: rain early A.M.: rain A.M. 26. Fine: rain P.M. 27. Fine. 28. Cloudy. 29. Fine: rain P.M. 30. Fine.

Applegarth Manse, Dumfries-shire.—Sept. 1. Fine harvest day: air electric. 2. Rain from midday. 3, 4. Showery. 5. Fine and clear. 6. Fine but cloudy. 7. Fine: a few drops of rain. 8. Cloudy A.M.: rain P.M. 9. Wet: cleared up: wet again. 10, 11. Occasional heavy showers. 12. Moist, but moderate. 13. The same: one shower. 14. Fine and clear. 15. Cold and showery. 16. Rain A.M. 17, 18. Very fine. 19. Fine A.M.: moist P.M. 20. Fine A.M. 21. Fine A.M.: showery. 22. Fine and dry: thunder A.M. 23. Rain. 24. Fine and fair. 25—27. Very wet. 28, 29. Moist. 30. Showery.

Sun shone out 28 days. Rain fell 21 days. Thunder 1 day.

Wind north by east 1 day. North-east 3 days. East-north-east 3 days. East 3 days. South-east  $\frac{1}{2}$  day. South 5 days. South-south-west 1 day. South-west  $9\frac{1}{2}$  days. West-south-west 2 days. West 1 day. North-west 1 day.

Calm 6 days. Moderate 11 days. Brisk 5 days. Strong breeze 5 days. Boisterous 2 days. Variable 1 day.

Mean temperature of the month ..... . 50°·30

Mean temperature of September, 1839 ... 52·12

Mean temperature of spring water ..... 50·90

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Boston.—Sept. 1. Cloudy. 2. Fine. 3. Rain: rain early A.M. 4—6. Fine. 7. Cloudy. 8. Fine. 9. Cloudy: rain early A.M. 10. Fine: rain early A.M. 11, 12. Fine. 13. Fine: rain P.M. 14. Cloudy. 15. Fine. 16. Fine: rain early A.M.: rain P.M. 17. Cloudy: rain early A.M. 18. Fine: rain P.M. 19, 20. Cloudy. 21. Cloudy: rain P.M. 22. Stormy and rain: rain A.M. 23. Rain: rain early A.M. 24. Fine: rain early A.M. 25. Rain: rain early A.M.: rain A.M. 26. Fine: rain P.M. 27. Fine. 28. Cloudy. 29. Fine: rain P.M. 30. Fine.

Applegarth Manse, Dumfries-shire.—Sept. 1. Fine harvest day: air electric. 2. Rain from midday. 3, 4. Showery. 5. Fine and clear. 6. Fine but cloudy. 7. Fine: a few drops of rain. 8. Cloudy A.M.: rain P.M. 9. Wet: cleared up: wet again. 10, 11. Occasional heavy showers. 12. Moist, but moderate. 13. The same: one shower. 14. Fine and clear. 15. Cold and showery. 16. Rain A.M. 17, 18. Very fine. 19. Fine A.M.: moist P.M. 20. Fine A.M. 21. Fine A.M.: showery. 22. Fine and dry: thunder A.M. 23. Rain. 24. Fine and fair. 25—27. Very wet. 28, 29. Moist. 30. Showery.

Sun shone out 28 days. Rain fell 21 days. Thunder 1 day.

Wind north by east 1 day. North-east 3 days. East-north-east 3 days. East 3 days. South-east  $\frac{1}{2}$  day. South 5 days. South-south-west 1 day. South-west  $9\frac{1}{2}$  days. West-south-west 2 days. West 1 day. North-west 1 day.

Calm 6 days. Moderate 11 days. Brisk 5 days. Strong breeze 5 days. Boisterous 2 days. Variable 1 day.

Mean temperature of the month ..... . 50°·30

Mean temperature of September, 1839 ... 52·12

Mean temperature of spring water ..... 50·90

FOUNTAIN GUM BOTTLE.

I have found that the fountain inkstand, sold for Stephens's ink (but those sold by Mordan are probably as good), are the best vessels to keep gum-water in for common daily use. The fluid part of the gum-water being considerably above the level of the surface of the gum which is exposed for use, prevents it from becoming dry, as is so constantly the case in other kinds of vessels.—J. E. GRAY.

CARINARIA VITREA, LAMARCK.

Three specimens of this very rare shell have lately been brought to this country by Mr. Reeve, who purchased them at a sale in Holland. The shell of the unhatched animal (as is shown by the shell remaining on the apex of one of the specimens) is smooth, polished, nearly discoidal, and formed of several (three or four) slowly enlarging whorls, so as exactly to resemble the shell of the *Helix lucida* in form and appearance. When the animal is hatched, it suddenly enlarges its shell, and changes its form. The keel is formed of two distinct laminae, one belonging to each side of the shell. In both these particulars, which I believe have not been noticed before, it exactly agrees with the more common *Carinaria Mediterranea*.—J. E. GRAY.

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Mean temperature of spring water ..... 50·90



Meteorological Observations made at the Apartments of the Royal Society by the Assistant Secretary, Mr. ROBERTSON; by Mr. THOMPSON at the Garden of the Horticultural Society at Chiswick, near London; by Mr. VEALL at Boston, and by Mr. DUNBAR at Applegarth Manse, Dumfries-shire.

Days of Month, 1840. Sept.	Barometer.				Thermometer.				Wind.				Rain.		Dew point. Lond.: Roy. Soc. 9 a.m.		
	Chiswick.		Boston, 84 a.m.		London: Roy. Soc.		Dumfries-shire.		Chiswick.		Dumfries-shire.		London: Roy. Soc. 9 a.m.			Dumfries-shire.	
	Max.	Min.	9 a.m.	8 1/2 p.m.	Fahr. 9 a.m.	Self-register. Max. Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Chiswick.	Dumfries-shire.	Max.	Min.		Chiswick.	Dumfries-shire.
1.	30.034	29.965	29.713	29.77	65.9	72.9	54.3	80	58	64	47 1/2	E.	E.	...	...	63	
2.	29.756	29.689	29.559	29.35	69.8	76.2	63.9	78	53	65 1/2	51	S.	calm SE. SW	...	...	66	
3.	29.864	29.727	29.569	29.42	61.3	75.7	56.3	66	43	56	45 1/2	W.	calm SW.	...	...	61	
4.	29.826	29.774	29.625	29.40	61.8	64.2	52.6	62	46	56	58	SW.	W.	...	...	58	
5.	30.012	30.063	29.937	29.75	60.0	64.8	51.2	68	40	57.5	58 1/2	W.	calm S.	...	...	57	
6.	30.276	30.196	30.112	29.50	59.8	67.2	50.8	74	53	62	59	S.	calm S.	...	...	55	
7.	30.132	30.066	30.005	29.80	62.6	69.8	57.3	66	44	62	60	SW.	calm SW.	...	...	56	
8.	30.180	30.105	30.073	29.58	58.4	68.0	52.3	71	51	58	57 1/2	NW.	calm WSW.	...	...	56	
9.	30.044	29.986	29.880	29.37	62.3	66.7	56.7	68	59	60	64	S.	W. SSW.	...	...	57	
10.	30.014	29.962	29.917	29.69	61.3	68.0	60.7	72	45	59	59	WNW.	W. SW.	...	...	59	
11.	29.994	29.933	29.901	29.30	60.0	66.8	51.9	69	40	57.5	54 1/2	SW.	W. WSW.	...	...	55	
12.	30.024	29.968	29.894	29.38	56.8	65.3	47.2	66	35	54	56	W.	W. NW.	...	...	55	
13.	29.900	29.856	29.643	29.27	53.8	62.2	45.2	65	34	54	58	SW.	W. W.	...	...	52	
14.	29.474	29.455	29.197	28.95	54.3	60.7	46.0	54	43	48.5	53 1/2	E.	calm E by S.	...	...	48	
15.	29.314	29.290	29.100	28.75	51.2	59.4	45.9	59	41	50	55	S.	calm N by E.	...	...	49	
16.	28.892	29.079	28.744	28.31	55.7	60.8	46.9	57	43	50	51 1/2	SW.	W. NE.	...	...	48	
17.	29.550	29.718	29.470	28.88	55.3	60.0	45.7	62	29	50.5	53 1/2	SW.	W. NE.	...	...	45	
18.	29.896	29.856	29.36	29.90	51.3	59.3	41.7	62	48	53	55 1/2	SW.	W. NE.	...	...	45	
19.	29.880	29.930	29.837	29.37	53.3	59.7	49.3	57	38	48.5	56	NNW.	N. ENE.	...	...	49	
20.	30.036	30.002	29.995	29.50	51.3	56.6	42.4	62	32	48	54 1/2	WNW.	W. calm SW.	...	...	44	
21.	30.026	29.988	29.735	29.40	54.5	57.8	45.0	63	52	51.5	56	SW.	W. SW.	...	...	45	
22.	29.500	29.497	29.482	28.87	55.2	62.5	52.4	53	40	51	56	S.	SW.	...	...	50	
23.	29.402	29.470	29.301	28.85	51.4	56.7	44.6	60	39	48	53	WSW.	calm ENE.	...	...	45	
24.	29.530	29.571	29.455	29.06	53.2	58.8	48.0	60	48	54	55	S.	calm S.	...	...	45	
25.	29.796	29.984	29.702	29.30	50.2	59.3	50.0	57	35	52	57	E.	calm S.	...	...	48	
26.	30.062	30.026	29.874	29.54	50.7	56.5	45.4	63	42	47	54 1/2	N.	calm S.	...	...	49	
27.	30.014	29.967	29.899	29.36	55.4	60.0	49.0	65	49	54	53 1/2	SW.	calm SW.	...	...	46	
28.	29.790	29.757	29.514	29.10	56.3	63.8	51.3	59	48	53	57	S.	calm SW.	...	...	52	
29.	29.624	29.677	29.583	28.94	55.5	60.3	50.2	60	42	52	50 1/2	SE.	calm SW.	...	...	53	
30.	29.998	29.947	29.934	29.30	52.8	59.0	46.3	60	51	51	53	W.	calm SW.	...	...	49	
Mean.	29.821	29.817	29.686	29.21	57.3	63.3	50.0	63.93	44.03	54.3	56.6			2.45	1.90	Sum. 1.854	Mean. 52

